

Levantamientos y Elecciones:
Indigenous Social Movements and Political
Participation in Ecuador and Bolivia

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Introduction

What measures does it take to incorporate some of the most marginalized peoples on earth into the process of fermenting democracy? In the last twenty years, indigenous social movements have blossomed across Latin America. These movements broach the task of enfranchising themselves through both formal political and informal activist measures. They have combined frequent marches, strikes, popular coups, constitutional assemblies, electoral gains, dialogue with governments, and occasionally violence to demand the recognition of their rights both as citizens of countries and as members of distinct ethnic nations. By examining how the two change agents of social movements and political parties have used *levantamientos* (popular uprisings) and *elecciones* (elections), I will argue that the recent elections of pro-indigenous governments and improvements in indigenous enfranchisement in Bolivia and Ecuador since 2000 depended on both mechanisms to emerge.

Ecuador and Bolivia's indigenous social movements and political parties have proved the strongest in South America and both countries have undergone significant constitutional changes in the last decade with respect to indigenous populations. However, different historical trajectories and contrasting political outcomes offer a rich analysis of how different conditions and actions have affected the advancement of indigenous enfranchisement.

As tools of both political parties and social movements, *levantamientos* and *elecciones* each manifest a different type of growth in liberal democracy 'by the people, for the people.' *Levantamientos* engage the raw energy of frustrated, long-abused, and now-empowered populations that do not hesitate to throw out heads of state, ministers of

government, and legislative bodies. They feed on heightening popular demand for governments which serve their constituents' interests before those of foreign elites and markets. These *levantamientos* have the power to paralyze a country's infrastructure and curtail food supplies to large urban areas (Collins 2000, 41-42; Yashar 2005, 144).

While a powerful, essential tool for the current movements, *levantamientos* pose the risks of military oppression and/or alienation from non-indigenous populations which can limit their effectiveness. Meanwhile, *elecciones* and political parties help formally incorporate indigenous demands into preexisting structures. They may, however, sap social movements' energy and experienced leadership, as well as alienating constituents whose traditional governance structures value consensus and rotational leadership rather than leadership by individuals.

I will measure indigenous enfranchisement in terms of four factors which encapsulate the complexities of recent state-indigenous relations—political participation, political representation, access to basic services, and self-determination. Foundational to democracy, these measures mirror the multiple levels at which the indigenous citizen and the indigenous community interact and struggle with government and the world order (Sieder 2002, 5). *Political participation* reflects the ability and impetus to take an active role in one's own governance. *Political representation* reflects the ability and effectiveness of government structure to incorporate all of its citizens' needs and demands. *Access to basic services* such as education, infrastructure, water, and reasonably priced food, reflects the struggle against marginality at two levels—that of states in the global periphery and that of the indigenous in the state periphery. While the indigenous struggle for the previous measures may be more acute, these issues concern

broad swaths of the population. The last factor, *self-determination*, applies specifically to the indigenous populations since they must negotiate the volatile commodity of sovereignty with their governments. The concern of whether rights should apply at the level of the individual or at the level of the community shapes this factor since it involves rights and duties of citizens at multiple levels of governance. Together, these factors approximate the status of indigenous-state interaction.

This paper will begin by describing the emergence of indigenous identity-based activism drawing upon the work of Deborah Yashar (2005), then move to examine indigenous social movements and political parties, analyzing how each has used *levantamientos* and *elecciones* to produce indigenous enfranchisement. Donna Lee Van Cott (1995, 2000, 2002a, 2002b, 2005) will be a central scholar here, as she has written most extensively about indigenous political parties and multicultural constitutional reforms. Lastly, this paper will offer conclusions about the nature of interaction of the indigenous- state relations in South America and will suggest directions for further research.¹

Reemerging *Indigenismo*:

The Creation of Indigenous-Based Social Movements

Mobilization and political action around the indigenous identity within the nation-state is a relatively recent phenomenon in Latin America, excluding initial resistance to

¹ Before delving further, I make the caveat that this paper addresses broad, national-level movements which involve multiple indigenous and non-indigenous actors, and can therefore not address in detail the complex relations existent between and *inside of* these entities. Though I use the word ‘indigenous,’ I recognize that this fails to capture the diversity which the Americas’ ‘original’ (a problematic word itself) populations present. Similarly, the term non-indigenous is equally problematic since many Latin Americans are *mestizos* (bi- or multiracial); here, it will refer to those who do not consider themselves *indigena* (indigenous).

Iberian colonialism. Starting in the 1970s, and more markedly in the 1980s, identity-based organizing flourished. This tendency reflected global shifts from class-based mobilization to ‘New Social Movements’ which focus on specific populations or specific sets of issues (Jackson & Warren 2005, 551; Drake & Hershberg 2006, 11). Yashar describes the three factors which motivated this shift as ‘organizational capacity’ in the form of preexisting community networks; ‘opportunity’ in the form of open political organizational space; and ‘motivation’ in the form of changing citizenship regimes which challenged autonomy (2005, 58-59). I will explore each of these factors through the shift from corporatist policies to neoliberal economic implementation, the expansion of international support for indigenous rights, and the increasing importance of *indigenismo*.

Parallel Processes: Corporatism to Neoliberalism and Campesino to Indígena

Both Bolivia and Ecuador passed laws in the early twentieth century which effectively denied indigenous identities and reclassified the indigenous as *campesinos*, or peasants, and attempted to enmesh them into corporatist, clientelistic states. The key turning point in Ecuador was the *Ley de organización y regimen de las comunas* (Law of organization and system of communal lands) in 1937, which required them to register communally as a *comuna* unit in order to gain access to the state’s resources and institutions as well as to maintain land claims (Yashar 2005, 61 & 88-92). In Bolivia, the 1952 social revolution sought to galvanize a radical peasantry and foster the formation of a socialist state (Nash 1993, 56). Neither country successfully implemented these political landmarks on a national level, but nevertheless communicated to the populace that they would have to conform to imposed “modern” governmental structures and a proletarianized sense of struggle in order to effect positive social change.

While these class-based systems denied indigenous identity, they encouraged the formation of intra- and inter-community networks and a phantasm of participation in a people's government; both developments later came to support identity-based organization and political participation. Luis Macas, former president of the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador,² claims that the *Ley de comunas* itself provided for the "reconsolidation of indigenous community organizing" (Qtd. in Lucero 2003, 27). Corporatism allowed indigenous communities to maintain community autonomy and build community-level networks while simultaneously weaving them into the national political-economic fabric and encouraging the growth of necessary mobilizational capacity (Collins 2000, 42). These conditions later fostered their struggle as indigenous actors on the national scene.

The erosion of this corporatist system, the implementation of a neoliberal-influenced economic regime,³ and the expansion of liberal democracy began in the 1980s. Though corporatism followed the centuries-old trend of mandating assimilation, the neoliberal economic model imposed "synchronic pluralism" which led paradoxically to both the acknowledged equality of all peoples as consumers and producers and acknowledged subjugation of the indigenous as a people on the bottom rungs of "[vertically polarized]" economic order (Turner 72). Ironically, this new wave of policies also "Opened political space and encouraged so-called local control over development...while increasing tensions and diminishing resources on which livelihoods depend" (Jackson & Warren 2005, 551; Gustafson 2002, 275). The shifting economic

² Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador

³ Sawyer describes neoliberalism as "a cluster of governmental policies that aim to privatize, liberalize, and deregulate the national economy so as to encourage foreign investment and intensify export production" (2004, 7) She argues that, "Economic globalization represented...not so much a dwindling of state interventions as a change in their form and intent," (116).

system and the new world order created an environment ripe for both frustration and identity-based action.

Internationalization of the Indigenous Struggle

As Détente thawed the bipolarity of the world around the United States and the USSR, peoples and causes long subdued by superpower conflict began to exercise their previously hidden strength (Collins 2000, 45). International political bodies began to highlight the issue. The United Nations declared 1993 the “Year of the Indigenous Peoples” and International Labor Organization passed Convention No. 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (Corntassel & Primeau 1995; Corntassel & Holder 2002, 146). Though many of these moves served only as ‘paper’ solidarity, they symbolized an important step in assuring international support for indigenous causes which increased pressure on states to address injustices. More sophisticated technology and communication networks increased international support by connecting resources and global activists with specific causes (Brysk 1996, 49). Non-governmental and development organizations, environmental non-profit organizations, and the internet have markedly contributed to this internationalization. Globalization in its many forms has encouraged indigenous struggles and Brysk argues that the “indigenous rights movement was ‘born transnational’”⁴ (Quoted in Jackson & Warren 2005, 551).

Indigenismo

Encouraged by international trends which heightened domestic exploitation, the use of ‘Indianness’ has become, in the minds of many activists and scholars, the “most important” resource and mobilizing tool for collective action fighting for inclusion into

⁴ For a complete analysis of this internationalization, see Alison Brysk. 1996. “Turning Weakness into Strength: The Internationalization of Indian Rights.” *Latin American Perspectives* 23, (2): 38-57.

citizenship and for respect of plurinationalism⁵ (Selverston-Scher 2001, 71-72). Yashar argues that the increasing globalization and interference with economic and political autonomy “politicized ethnic cleavages,” in countries (2005, 54). Neoliberalism reinforced the indigenous identity as an excuse to lock the indigenous into the dungeons of a globalized economy. Ethnic-based organizing sprouted as “Representations of Indianness, not peasantness, were used to justify the relegation of indigenous producers to supporting players in agrarian modernization” (Pallares 2002, 54). This organizing led to “State ideologies of mestizaje...[shifting] to identities that valorized difference, in particular Indianness,” (Jackson & Warren 2005, 551), a momentous shift in countries in which a high percentage the population is partly or fully indigenous.⁶ What was once a social liability—indigenous ethnicity—became a source of strength and unity with which indigenous peoples have fomented social movements and political parties to fight for indigenous enfranchisement.

Stubborn Social Movements:

The Audacious Impetus for Rapid Mobilization and Change

Indigenous social movements laid the foundation for indigenous political participation and helped expand political space, making them the more important of the two types of agents addressed. Over the last three decades, these movements have painstakingly woven together potent alliances of previously powerless peoples. By

⁵ Plurinationalism, a key plank of South American indigenous struggles, argues that many distinct ethnic groups and/or nations make up these states and that these states must formally recognize and respect this diversity.

⁶ Ecuador has between 12% and 40% full-blooded indigenous, depending on the source of information (Pallares 2002, 6). In Bolivia, native speakers of a language other than Spanish account for 57% of the population—mostly Aymara and Quechua, but also 32 lowland groups (Gustafson 2002, 270). Another 30% self-identify as mestizo (US Dept. of State 2006)

tapping on this hidden strength, they have commanded national attention by flexing muscle capable of paralyzing transport and trade through road blocks, strikes, marches, and demonstrations. While strong, their power has neither grown linearly, nor has it remained static since achieved. *Levantamientos* made many demands ignored by governments and movements campaigned in many *elecciones* with unfavorable results, but both mechanisms produced clearly discernable gains, too. *Levantamientos*, as social movements' primary tool, especially contribute to the expansion of indigenous enfranchisement by forging open political space and commanding national attentions towards indigenous-related issues. These countries have not overcome long-standing habits of exploitation and oppression, but without these social movements, the indigenous would have substantially less ability to challenge their subjugation.

Ecuador's Enthusiastic and Organized CONAIE

The Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador (CONAIE) has successfully mobilized for indigenous enfranchisement through both *levantamientos* and *elecciones*. Since 2000, CONAIE has sponsored or been a significant part of no fewer than eighteen nationally significant *levantamientos* and also helped oust two presidents through popular coups (Ecuador: News and Commentary 2007). By mobilizing indigenous and non-indigenous voters, CONAIE has succeeded in incorporating indigenous interests into Ecuador's universe of political issues, aided by the separate but highly associated political party Pachakutik⁷. CONAIE became practiced in both the "politics of disruption" (Pallares 2002, 223-224) and the politics of elections.

⁷ Pachakuti was an important figure in the pre-Colombian expansion of the Inca Empire during the 15th century. His legend has been used repeatedly to invoke indigenous pride, rights, and mobilization.

CONAIE's *levantamientos* afforded the movement more leverage in their fight to alter the current nature of the Ecuadorian State. The eighteen indigenous demonstrations most often ended in negotiations with the Ecuadorian government, illustrating that this type of political action both gained political capital as a valid and effective measure and that CONAIE's energy has not subsided since its debut *levantamiento* in 1990. These demonstrations reveal that electoral politics and formal government structures have not yet evolved to effectively respond to indigenous demands for incorporation but that significant, though incomplete, changes are occurring which invite the repetition of these actions.

Frustrated by elected presidents who betrayed their interests, CONAIE and many non-indigenous citizens initiated "popular coups" in 1997, 2000, and 2005. Whereas the military or a military-elite alliance usually staged coups in Ecuador, these recent coups signal the emergence of a new type of popular political power (Pallares 2002, 223-224). According to Pallares, this form of state-social movement interaction can become problematic both because it exposes faults in the strategy of movements and in the ability of the government to respond to the needs of its people; additionally, the aftermaths of these types of events may leave the political scene vulnerable to the original interests which the events combated (2002, 223-224). However, these politics of disruption have proven effective over the course of several years, shown especially through the 2006 election of pro-indigenous President Rafael Correa. In the case of the 2000 coup, the Vice President Álvaro Noboa took up the presidency and in a little over a month had organized the passage of the feared dollarization plan which had provoked the coup of his predecessor, Jamil Mahuad (WNU 2000). Support of the indigenous movement

increased after the January 2000 based on an understanding of the coup as a valid protest action and not a serious power claim (Collins 2000, 46). Many within the movement saw the coup as a tactical error from which to learn. Although CONAIE and Pachakutik both supported Noboa and his replacement Lucio Gutiérrez early in their presidencies, the repetition of a popular coup in both cases demonstrates that CONAIE willingly and quickly banished leaders who betrayed their support and denied to address their demands effectively (Economist 2000).

Though CONAIE participated in popular coups, they have not abandoned the electoral system. Mobilizing voters and demanding accountability from elected officials have been principal tactics (CONAIE 2007). This commitment illustrates they aim not to take over the country but to improve democratic processes (Sawyer 2004, 217). In an open letter to Ecuadorians and President Rafael Correa, CONAIE called the election of Correa, “a triumph of all the people, that we have demonstrated to the world that we are firmly committed to construct a distinct country, a Plurinational state for all Ecuadorians” (Uvijindia 2006, Translated by Lopez). This triumph has taken years of political and social organizing, and is as yet untested, though seemingly promising. Though the candidate of Pachakutik, Luis Macas, did not get elected in 2006, CONAIE’s goal of a Constituent Assembly nevertheless advanced.

Through both *levantamientos* and somewhat through *elecciones*, CONAIE has augmented indigenous enfranchisement (See Table 1 on pg. 16). Though Pallares questions the efficacy of continual direct action, the election of President Rafael Correa and his insistence on a Constitutional Assembly to grant Ecuadorians more direct control over governance speaks to the dramatic opening up of political spaces for both

enfranchisement factors of political participation and political representation of indigenous peoples. Besides the election, the number and continuity of demonstrations show that indigenous and non-indigenous people in Ecuador have actively begun to demand a voice in a just form of government. As long as this powerful activist demand coincides with electoral action, it strengthens the electoral system and does not sound its death knell. With respect to the last two factors of enfranchisement—access to basic services and self-determination, the gains are less clear cut. Access to basic services remains an issue across rural South America, but cases like that of the land invasion settlement Itchimbía, in Quito illustrate that association with CONAIE has brought material benefits to some constituents (Dosh 2004, 186). In the realm of self-determination, the 1998 post-popular coup constitutional reform provided for “sectional autonomous governments” and validated the rights to indigenous identity, language, and customary law (Van Cott 2005, 125-127; Constitución Política de la República de Ecuador⁸). While an advance on paper, the lack of sovereignty in practice over land and subterranean resources (i.e. oil and mined resources) as well as the nontransferability of existing governance structures problematizes the apparent success (Sawyer 2004, 51 & 58). The upcoming 2007 Constitutional Assembly cannot help but address the issues of indigenous sovereignty and land more thoroughly, a focus itself constitutes a momentous leap. Through patient struggle, CONAIE has positioned indigenous rights and well-being as central national political issues. Unity among Ecuador’s diverse indigenous people and with non-indigenous populations energized CONAIE’s activist and political campaigns for their vision of a more just, tolerant, and democratic society.

⁸ See appendix for constitutional text regarding indigenous rights.

Conflicting Interests?: Bolivia's CSUTCB, CIDOB, and the Cocaleros

The higher proportion of indigenous people, the faltering unity among indigenous social movements and the predominance of the international, class-focused struggle over coca differentiate the path and outcome of campaigns for indigenous enfranchisement in Bolivia. Three main social movements define Bolivia's landscape with respect to indigenous enfranchisement. The Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB), based in the union movements of the 1950s and created in 1979, draws members mainly from highlanders who self-identify as Quechua or Aymara Indians (Gustafson 2002, 271-273). The Confederación Indígena de Bolivia (CIDOB) draws from mostly lowland indigenous groups who depend on non-governmental organizations for development since the government has ignored them (Ibid). Lastly, the *cocalero*, or coca-growers' movement, has become "one of the best organized and most highly mobilized sectors in the country," led to prominence by now-President Evo Morales and made up mostly by Quechua and Aymara migrants displaced from their original homes by poverty (Albó 1994, 63).

Since 2000, Bolivia has witnessed a 'hypermobilization' of social movements, changing the course of national history. Near continual demonstrations began with the 2000 Cochabamba Water Wars⁹, persisted with the Bolivian Gas Wars¹⁰, and slowed, though did not end with the 2005 election of Morales as president. These mobilizations removed five presidents from power, drove out or weakened several multinational corporations, and helped elect President Morales, a *cocalero* and Aymara Indian (Bolivia:

⁹ The Water Wars consisted of 5 months of protest against the Bolivian government, the World Bank, and the Bechtel Corporation over the privatization of water in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Olivera 2004; Olivera 2007).

¹⁰ The Bolivian Gas Wars represent the ongoing protests of resource-extraction by foreign companies and U.S. coca-eradication measures.

News and Commentary 2007). Social movements and their *levantamientos* spearheaded these changes which produced indigenous political parties and favorable results of *elecciones*.

The three social movements, later translated into or fractured among new or existing parties, have taken quite distinct paths in the last seven years. CIDOB, the lowland group, fractured due to a substantially smaller population proportion in their locales, a severe lack from government attention, faltering commitment to and from highland social movements, organizational infighting and political alliances with traditional parties with little loyalty to indigenous causes (Van Cott 2003, 766; Van Cott 2005, 60-62 & 93; Gustafson 2002, 271-273). CSUTCB, the highland Aymara and Quechua *campesinos* movement, shifted more of its focus to the coca growers' plight and also suffered from the competition of its leaders (Van Cott 2003, 92; Van Cott 2005 767). Eventually, the organization became a tool for the militant ethno-nationalist Felipe Quispe who used it to support a short-lived political party (Ibid). The *cocalero* movement, led by Morales, grew in strength because it appealed to broad constituencies, not limiting itself to indigenous-specific issues, and because of favorable domestic and international frustrations which it addressed (Van Cott 2003, 768). The *cocaleros* became central actors in a number of uprisings in Bolivia. Morales successfully helped translate this popular energy to the party Movimiento al Socialismo¹¹ which had astounding success in the 2002 and 2006 elections, both of which had high voter turnout (Olivera 2007; Corto Nacional Electoral 2006, 7). Though the continuation of mobilizations under Morales could be taken as proof that the 'politics of disruption' impeded the development of a stable government, and especially a stable executive, the

¹¹ Movement to Socialism

mobilizations mark the awakening of a popular demand for government for and by the people, not a government for and by US corporate interests or, for that matter, for and by only indigenous interests.

The racial project of differentiation and the coca crises made Bolivian indigenous-specific movements weaker. Violent hostilities from the army and government as well as racial rhetoric in urban media created for urban-dwellers a modern, Spanish-speaking, light-skinned “we” and an “anti-systemic, anti-modern, violent racial other” comparable to the Taliban, the Basque ETA as an “ethnic, separatist, and terrorist” racial ‘other’ (Gustafson 2002, 288-289). Quispe, the secretary-general of the CSUTCB, inflamed these divisions through his separatist rhetoric, hostility towards non-indigenous citizens, and occasional use of violent mobilization (Van Cott 2003, 767). The Bolivian centeredness on coca as a symbol of “indigenous resistance to the Bolivian state and Bolivian resistance to U.S. imperialism,” shrouded the social upheaval with clear-cut U.S. hostility, fueling Bolivian support for the *cocalero* struggle (Van Cott 2005, 58). While coca represented livelihood and tradition to the indigenous and/or *cocalero* struggle, energy which might have been spent fighting for specifically ethnically-based justice went to fighting state and international level coca-based injustices. As Morales’ leadership and election illustrates, the indigenous and *cocalero* struggles are not mutually exclusive, though neither are they carbon copies of one another.

Though disjointed, the indigenous social movements demonstrate a direct connection between *levantamientos* and *elecciones* and between these agents and enfranchisement (See Table 1 on pg. 16). The ‘hypermobilization,’ high voter turnout, emergence of new political parties, and election of more indigenous/pro-indigenous

officials at various levels illustrate a marked rise in political participation and representation of all Bolivians, especially those previously disenfranchised. Access to basic services and self-determination have been more ignored on the national scene, but the 2006-2007 Constitutional Assembly initiated by Morales and MAS will likely address the issue. Access to water was ‘saved’ from privatization in the 2000, but Bolivia remains one of South America’s poorest countries. Though the election of Evo Morales itself stands as a victory for the social movements and political parties, what occurs in the rest of his term and afterwards is pregnant with possibilities, both fruitful and not for indigenous enfranchisement.

Table 1: Social Movements and Indigenous Enfranchisement
Factor of Enfranchisement

	Social Movements	Political Participation	Political Representation	Self-Determination	Access to Basic Services
<i>Case</i>	<i>Ecuador</i>	+	+	+/-	+/-
	CONAIE	<i>Space opened</i> <i>L-Dramatically Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>Structures improving</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>‘Paper’ gains and attention</i> <i>L-Pressured, some gains</i> <i>E-Pressured</i>	<i>Shared issue</i> <i>L-Pressured, some gains</i> <i>E-Pressured</i>
	<i>Bolivia</i>	+	+/-	+/-	+/-
	Cocaleros & CSUTCB	<i>Space opened</i> <i>L-Dramatically Increased</i> <i>E-Increased, see below</i>	<i>Improvement</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>‘Paper’ gains and attention</i> <i>L-Pressured, some gains</i> <i>E-Some Pressure</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured, some gains</i> <i>E-Some Pressure</i>
	CIDOB	<i>Space still quite closed</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Fractured</i>	<i>Lack Numbers & cohesiveness</i> <i>L-Not able</i> <i>E-Not able</i>	<i>‘Paper’ gains and attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Not able</i>	<i>Still struggling</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Not able</i>

(Overall Outcome; L=Levantamientos; E=Elecciones)

Prickly Parties:

The Advantages and Dangers of Indigenous Parties

Converting the energy of a social movement into a formal political party has distinct advantages, allowing for the penetration of new public spheres and power over legality. The disadvantages, however, can undermine the energy and effectiveness of indigenous-based struggle via the co-optation of leadership and internal decision-making structures. Van Cott concludes that these ethnic parties have had a positive effect on democratic institutions and mixed results for indigenous peoples and cultures (2005, 228-235). Numerous other scholars have also observed this outcome (Eckstein 2001, 398-400; Selverston-Scher 2001, 10 & 123). While this may be the case, political parties and their use of *levantamientos* and *elecciones* are nevertheless essential to the advancement of indigenous enfranchisement in formal government structures.

Ecuador's Pachakutik: Electoral Politics as Both Compromise and Gain

The main indigenous party in Ecuador has been the Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik Nuevo País¹² (Pachakutik). As a political off-shoot of CONAIE founded in 1996, it promotes cultural diversity and grassroots participation; it draws support from both indigenous (urban and rural) and non-indigenous populations from multiple economic classes (Andolina 2003, 734). Though closely associated with CONAIE, with many of its leaders as members, candidates, and officials, the two are not officially connected (Gerlach 2003, 76). The majority of its candidates are indigenous (Madrid 2006, 166), but it has not limited itself to purely “indigenous” concerns, lessening the long-standing dichotomy between “Indians and national society” (Macdonald 2002, 182-183). As mentioned earlier, the ability to attract non-indigenous

¹² Pachakutik Movement for Plurinational Unity—New Country

support has been vital to forwarding its collective agenda. Pachakutik played an important role in advancing ‘plurinationalism’ at the 1997-1998 Constitutional Assembly, supported by its strong hold in civil society.

The last six years have proved very eventful for Pachakutik. Despite its association through CONAIE with the January 2000 coup, Pachakutik won nineteen city governments and five provincial governorships in the May 2000 election, a significant gain for indigenous representation and participation (Connection 2000). In 2002, CONAIE and Pachakutik helped elect Lucio Gutiérrez, a supposedly populist leader (WNU 2003). Gutiérrez rewarded Pachakutik by choosing several indigenous leaders from their ranks to serve as ministers, notably Nina Pacari and Luis Macas (Connection 2003). Pachakutik also got fourteen congressmen elected, out of a total of 100 possible seats (Ibid). However, in August 2003, Pachakutik and CONAIE broke with Gutiérrez after he implemented neoliberal policies (Economist 2000). By April 2005, Gutiérrez had been popularly ousted and replaced by Alfredo Palacio. Though Palacio began serious moves towards the long-demanded Constitutional Assembly, he also promised to honor debt gained through neoliberal policies and to respect U.S. military bases in the country and comply with the U.S.’s Plan Colombia. In 2006, Pachakutik ran Luis Macas, former CONAIE-president and long-time leader of indigenous struggles in Ecuador. CONAIE was split between supporting Macas, who some described as a “social leader not a politician,” and supporting Rafael Correa, who like Macas supported restructuring the constitution but also had broader popular support (Lemoine).

These tumultuous years full of both *levantamientos* and *elecciones* offer several insights into the relationship between indigenous enfranchisement and indigenous

involvement in political parties in Ecuador. While the dramatic rise in indigenous candidates and a focus on getting out the indigenous vote has resulted in significant gains for both Pachakutik and CONAIE as powerful indigenous political actors, the indigenous vote is not completely unified nor is it the only mobilized actor within Ecuador's dramatic democratic upheavals. The gulf between customary practices and liberal democratic electoral practices results in "strange alliances, shifting policies and decisions, and public internal conflicts" (Beck & Mijeski 2001; Brysk 1996, 51-52). The differences in goals and values between customary and electoral governance creates the danger of alienation between candidates/officials and constituents. Also, CONAIE demands for actions such as the dissolution of Congress and government and its frequent use of the protest slogan "¡Que se vayan todos! They all must go!" leads to contradictory relations between electoral and social movement sectors of the indigenous struggle (Collins 2000, 41-42). Like CONAIE, Pachakutik's participation has highlighted indigenous issues, but not taken control of the national political universe.

The participation in both *levantamientos* and *elecciones* by political parties has drastically altered the relationship between Ecuador's indigenous populations and the Ecuadorian state by increasing the indigenous' access to the rights of citizenship (See Table 2 on pg. 25). Though not the majority, they have wielded much power—deposing presidents, paralyzing the country, demanding justice through constitutional reform, laws, and action. By incorporating themselves into electoral politics, they have improved political representation because there are more indigenous candidates and more non-indigenous candidates with sensitivity to what newly enfranchised indigenous constituents need and demand. The upcoming Constituent Assembly will no doubt affect

how indigenous sectors find and claim representation in the state. As a caveat, by definition ‘political representation’ refers to that within the electoral system, masking the difficulty of meshing customary indigenous governance structures with electoral politics. As Madrid writes, political parties walk the “perilous path between compromise and cooptation” (2006, 176). Though political participation has not become a ubiquitous phenomenon, it is nevertheless more widespread. Political participation has also improved through positive reinforcement of evolving Ecuadorian governance and the perceived increase of the importance of rights for all (Grant 2006, 10). Rafael Correa’s website can be read in either Spanish or Quichua/Kichwa, attesting to the recognition of indigenous constituents, though there are many other indigenous languages in Ecuador besides Quichua (Rafael Correa 2007). Access to basic services may not have directly or drastically improved, but by beginning to transform themselves into a politically potent block, as well as by staunchly opposing neoliberalism and neoimperialism, attention to this issue will likely increase. Though preliminary, gains include recognition of communal property rights, the acceptance of indigenous languages as official languages, the institutionalization of bilingual education, and an increase in overall Ecuadorian demand for economic justice at the international scale. Self-determination, like access to basic rights, remains a factor of enfranchisement which has promising potential but as yet lacks substantive improvement. The 1998 Constitution offers a very strong base off of which to demand further improvements, but its tenets themselves yet need implementation. Posed with power to affect the upcoming Constitutional Assembly, Pachakutik and sympathetic parties will have the power to expand indigenous enfranchisement.

Too Many Actors on the Stage?: Bolivia's Indigenous Political Parties

In Bolivia the development of indigenous political parties has taken a rather different path than that in Ecuador. Primarily, as in the indigenous social movements, fragmentation and competition between indigenous political parties has weakened overall solidarity. Nevertheless, Bolivia managed to famously become the first country in Latin America with an indigenous president. Secondly, the 1994 decentralization of government had profound effects for indigenous enfranchisement through political parties.

Indigenous political parties have a long history in Bolivia, where since the late 1970s tiny indigenous parties fought against daunting odds (Van Cott 2003, 764). These parties lost strength by the mid-eighties and the second wave of indigenous parties after decentralization in 1994 dwarfed the original wave (Van Cott 2005, 49). Two main parties emerged: 1) the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), a *cocalero* and nominally indigenous party led by Evo Morales, and 2) the Movimiento Indígena Pachakutik¹³ (MIP), a *katarista*¹⁴, ethno-nationalist indigenous party based in the CSUTCB and led by Felipe Quispe. By 2002, the two parties together won 27% of the national vote (Van Cott 2003, 752). This seemingly small number becomes colossal when compared to earlier electoral outcomes for indigenous parties which topped off at 4.6% in previous years (Ibid). The number of seats in congress held by indigenous-based party increased from four to forty-one¹⁵, a factor of ten, between 1997 and 2002. By 2006, MAS had eight-four congressmen¹⁶; MIP had none (Corto Nacional Electoral 2006, 7).

¹³ Indigenous Movement Pachakutik

¹⁴ *Katarismo* blended class consciousness with ethnic consciousness.

¹⁵ Out of a total of 157 congressmen—130 deputies and 27 senators.

¹⁶ That is, 72 out of 130 deputies and 12 out of 27 senators.

This rise of both political parties and relatively rapid fall of MIP reflects both the wave of indigenous empowerment that rapidly took hold in Bolivia, especially since 2000, as well as the importance of diversifying the constituents represented by indigenous-based parties. Felipe Quispe, the leader of the MIP, articulated hostility towards Bolivia's non-indigenous populations, reinforcing dichotomies of citizenship with his call for a separate, specifically Aymara state (Madrid 2006, 165; Van Cott 2003, 767). Not only did the militant Quispe invoke division between indigenous and non-indigenous populations, he also invoked division between the Aymara, Quechua, and lowland indigenous groups. Meanwhile, Evo Morales invoked his *cocalero* identity and less so his indigenous identity (also Aymara), merging two powerful social causes—the right to coca production despite U.S. hostility and the advancement of indigenous enfranchisement.

Levantamientos and *elecciones* have jointly allowed the MAS 'phenomenon' to develop. *Levantamientos* and unrest have proved a powerful source for rapid social change, fueling the empowerment of Bolivians against an exploitative world system and of indigenous Bolivians against a Euro-centric citizen ideal. Morales and Quispe, like Luis Macas in Ecuador, were central leaders in social movements before becoming political figures. The social movements thus produced leaders who then became politicians key to the advancement of indigenous representation in the democratic government.

In conjunction with the social movements, decentralization had an important role in the emergence of strong indigenous political parties. Through the Ley de Participación Popular of April 1994, each district got direct access to funds (Gustafson 2002, 279-81).

Decentralization had mixed consequences for the diverse indigenous populations of Bolivia. For the highland populations (mostly Aymara and Quechua), in which many rural districts had indigenous majorities, this change meant that indigenous actors had increased access to funds as well as control over how they spent those funds in their communities (Van Cott 2005, 64-65). In terms of the development of indigenous political parties, this move helped political participation grow. This growth supported MAS, but recruitment into existing traditional parties¹⁷ complicated unity of mobilization and dispersed energies (Gustafson 2002, 279-81). For the lowland populations, this decentralization decreased indigenous electoral power because even if certain candidates got the entire indigenous vote, it still might not constitute the majority, especially in those areas nearer to urban centers (Ibid). Quispe argued that decentralization weakened *katarismo* and thus meant that whites got the control of the national level while the Indians got the local level; that is, the indigenous continued to subordinate to whites, although Quispe also felt that it was “clear that decentralized municipal governance is not ending pan-local movements” like CSUTCB and CIDOB (Gustafson 2002, 292). The election of Evo Morales in 2006 contradicts Quispe’s assertion, though Morales’ has not been a panacea to indigenous struggles.

Besides municipal decentralization, the 1994 Constitution also provides for the creation of Indigenous Municipal Districts, though in practice these have not provided true autonomy. Although laws passed in the years following 1994 instituted collective property rights, the social upheaval beginning in 2000 over foreign exploitation of oil, gas, and water present on indigenous lands demonstrate that the Bolivian State and

¹⁷ The three traditional parties in Bolivia have been the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (Nationalist Revolutionary Movement), the *Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario* (Leftist Revolutionary Movement), and *Acción Democrática Nacionalista* (Nationalist Democratic Action).

powerful multinational corporations like Bechtel and Enron (Pando 1997) hardly treated them as inalienable. These DMIs had no specific functions and no autonomous powers and were left to get what little funding they could from international development agencies (Van Cott 2002b).

Even though fragmented, *levantamientos* and *elecciones* have still reaped advancements in indigenous enfranchisement (See Table 2 on pg. 25). Political participation has been enhanced through decentralization at the local level, at least in the highlands. If MAS succeeds with its goals for the Constitutional Assembly of 2007, at the very least a legal framework will likely set up increased local autonomy of indigenous groups, as well as departments and districts, though the question of sovereignty in practice and that of resources must be met before the constitutional revisions prove to be more than idealistic words on paper. However, the increase in activism and the comparatively sympathetic governing party may herald marked improvements, though admittedly improvements from meager beginnings. Political representation has increased via indigenous political parties and decentralization through the election of a majority indigenous or pro-indigenous government, yet the process is far from done and the government has many diverse issues to tackle. Though Evo Morales' Aymara roots were emphasized in the international scene and have since grown more important in Bolivia, his primary identification has always been as a *cocalero*, reflective of persistent splits along class and ethnic lines, even among indigenous people (Douglas 2007). The diversity of indigenous groups and viewpoints cannot be discounted, as they have huge ramifications for unity. In the arena of access to basic rights, customary law, collective property rights, bilingual education, and translation in legal situations have been secured

on paper (Constitución Política de la República de Bolivia, 2005). As mentioned, other actors have not always respected these rights, and the nationalization of industries such as oil and gas which exploit indigenous lands does not necessarily guarantee a just sharing of profits or sustainable use, as demonstrated by the nationalization of the mining industry after the 1952 revolution (Nash 1993, 54-55). Thus self-determination, as of yet, has not greatly improved since the DMIs have virtually no power. As in Ecuador, indigenous political parties have both much potential and much to battle in the coming years in the struggle for indigenous enfranchisement.

Table 2: Political Parties and Indigenous Enfranchisement
Factor of Enfranchisement

	Political Parties	Political Participation	Political Representation	Self-Determination	Access to Basic Services
<i>Case</i>	<i>Ecuador</i>	+	+	+/-	+/-
	Pachakutik	<i>Improvement</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>Improvement</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> strongly <i>E-Pressured</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Pressured</i>
	<i>Bolivia</i>	+	+	+/-	+/-
	MAS	<i>Improvement</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Dramatically Increased</i>	<i>Improvement</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Increased</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Pressured</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Pressured</i>
	MIP	<i>Some Increase</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Some Increase</i>	<i>Faltering</i> <i>L-Increased</i> <i>E-Alienated</i>	<i>Alienation due to extremism</i> <i>L-Alienated</i> <i>E-Alienated</i>	<i>Attention</i> <i>L-Pressured</i> <i>E-Some pressure</i>

(Overall Outcome; L=Levantamientos; E=Elecciones)

Levantamientos y Elecciones:

Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

As mechanisms for social change, *elecciones* and especially *levantamientos* have advanced indigenous enfranchisement and incorporated indigenous voices into the Ecuadorian and Bolivian governments. Indigenous social movements and subsequent political parties helped foster new national dialogues about how both the state and the world should govern themselves. Both countries' governments face possible turning points in the next year as a direct result of these mechanisms.¹⁸ Because the reformation of government and constitutions are at stake, the coming developments will greatly impact indigenous enfranchisement. Also, indigenous social movements and political parties have staged themselves to be highly influential in these debates. The unity of regional and interethnic alliances will have an important effect for the future of the indigenous struggle.

On a larger scale, these country-specific cases connect to an array of related issues on both a continental and global scale and offer ripe ground for further research—three possible directions for further research about indigenous struggles investigate the fates of current and proposed Constitutional Assemblies, the effect of shared leadership between national and local movements, and the experiment of unifying indigenous social movements with others for broader societal evolution. Van Cott (2000) traced multicultural constitutional reform through the 1990s, but the coming reforms,

¹⁸ On March 8th, 2007, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa said he would side with the Electoral Tribunal's decision to dismiss 57 out of 100 congressmen because they opposed Correa's planned Constitutional Assembly on April 15th (BBC 2007a; Bass & Dudley 2007). Polls say that Correa enjoys 70% of popular support (Ibid). As of March 20th, the Ecuadorian Congress building is guarded from attempted 'break-ins' by dismissed congressmen by more than a thousand police officers and Congress held session with substitutes (BBC 2007c). Meanwhile, Bolivian President Evo Morales announced that after the public decides on the new Bolivian Constitution, the entire government will likely be put up for reelection (BBC 2007b).

specifically in Bolivia and Ecuador promise to reap new insights about indigenous-state relations. How they these Assemblies they change government structure and indigenous and non-indigenous interaction? Will the Constitutions prove effective or be left unimplemented and what response will they incite if they do not bring about desired changes? How will the world order and world market treat these reconfigured governments? The last two suggestions for research relate because they both focus on the interaction between movements—first between local and national level movements (Dosh 2007) and second, between differently-focused movements (i.e. indigenous rights, women's rights, environment, etc...). How do social movement alliances and activist/leader-sharing help or hurt causes? Is unity as beneficial as it seems to be? If these alliances succeed, how do they and can they avoid co-optation by bureaucratic systems?

Indigenous social movements and political parties have made marked gains in both political participation and representation, but while they've positioned the issues of access to basic services and especially self-determination, the fates of these factors of enfranchisement are as yet elusive. Broader alliances, incorporation of both indigenous and non-indigenous interests, and nonviolent measures have effected the most positive change for indigenous enfranchisement in the past, but the outcomes of the tumultuous present have yet to reveal themselves. Indigenous social movements and political participation have re-sculpted precedent 500 years in the making in their difficult and on-going struggle for justice. If the unfolding events are anywhere near as revolutionary as the last twenty years, South America will present an entirely new face to the world.

Appendix—Translated Text of Constitutional Reforms

I. Bolivian Constitutional Text, added 1994¹⁹

A. Indigenous Rights:

Art. 171. [The Bolivian State] recognizes, respects and protects the legal framework and social, economic, and cultural rights of the indigenous peoples which inhabit national territory, especially those relating to their ‘originary’ communal lands, guaranteeing the use and sustainable extraction of natural resources, their identity, values, languages, customs and institutions.

The State recognizes the legal corporate body of the indigenous and peasant communities and the peasant associations and unions.

The natural authorities of the indigenous and peasant communities will be able to exercise administrative functions and administer appropriate norms as alternative solutions to conflicts, in conformity with their customs and procedures, which may never be contrary to this Constitution and the law. The law will make these functions compatible with the attributions of the Powers of the State.

(Modified by Law No. 1585, 12 August 1994)

B. Decentralization of Government

Article 110. The Executive Power, at the departmental level, functions according to a regime of administrative decentralization.

In each department exists a Departmental Council, presided over by the Prefect, whose composition and powers will be established by law.

(Modified by Law No. 1585, 12 August 1994)

II. Ecuadorian Constitutional Text, added 1998²⁰ *(from Ch. 5: Of Collective Rights, First Section: Of Indigenous Peoples and Blacks or Afroecuatorians)*

A. Definition and Inclusion:

Article 83. The indigenous peoples, which self-define themselves as nationalities of ancestral races, and the black or afroecuatorians, form a part of the Ecuadorian State, unique and indivisible.

B. Collective Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Article 84. The State will recognize and guarantee to the indigenous peoples, in conformity with this Constitution and the law, the respect to the public order and human rights, the following collective rights:

1. To maintain, develop, and strengthen their spiritual, cultural, linguistic, social, political, and economic identity and traditions.
2. To conserve the absolute ownership of communal lands, which will be inalienable, unassailable, and indivisible, excepting the State’s ability to

¹⁹ (Constitución Política de la República de Bolivia 2005, Translated by Lopez)

²⁰ (Constitución Política de la República de Ecuador de 1998 2005, Translated by Lopez)

declare the lands' public utility. These lands will be exempt from property taxes.

3. To maintain the ancestral possession of these communal lands and to obtain its free adjudication, conforming to the law.
4. To participate in the use, enjoyment, administration and conservation of renewable natural resources that may exist in the lands.
5. To be consulted about plans and programs of surveying and exploitation of nonrenewable resources that may exist in the lands and that may affect [the indigenous] environmentally or culturally.
6. To conserve and to promote their practices of maintaining biodiversity and natural habitat.
7. To conserve and develop their traditional forms of coexistence and social organization, of production (generación), and exercise of authority.
8. To not be displaced, as a people, from their lands.
9. To the collective property rights of ancestral knowledge; to the validation, use, and development [of this knowledge] in conformity with the law.
10. To maintain, develop, and administer their cultural and historical patrimony.
11. To access to a quality education in an intercultural, bilingual system.
12. To their systems, knowledge, and practices of traditional medicine, including the right to the protection of ritual and sacred places, plants, animals, minerals, and ecosystems which are vital from their point of view.
13. To formulate priorities in plans and projects for the development and betterment of their economic and social conditions; and to adequate financing from the State.
14. To participate, through representatives, in the official organisms which determine the law.
15. To use symbols and emblems that identify themselves

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